

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for associating a field replaceable unit with a medical diagnostic system, the method comprising:

querying for information on a field replaceable unit to be associated with a medical diagnostic system by sending a query to an electronic device
5 associated with the field replaceable unit;

receiving information on the field replaceable unit from the electronic device; and

configuring the medical diagnostic system in accordance with the information.

10 2. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of querying for information comprises sending a query to a memory circuit attached to the field replaceable unit.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of receiving information comprises receiving identification information from the electronic device.

15 4. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of receiving information further comprises receiving association information from the electronic device, the association information providing data for the step of configuring the medical diagnostic system.

20 5. The method of claim 3, wherein the step of receiving information further comprises receiving association information from a remote service facility, the association information providing data for the step of configuring the medical diagnostic system.

6. The method of claim 5, further comprising the step of communicating operational data of the field replaceable unit to the remote service facility.

25 7. The method of claim 5, wherein the step of receiving association information from the remote service facility comprises generating a subscription file, the subscription file including data uniquely identifying a field service unit and

a service subscription for the medical diagnostic system and storing the subscription file in a machine readable form.

8. The method of claim 7, further comprising generating a service request subject to a service subscription and verifying a subscription file status
5 based upon the service request.

9. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of communicating operational data related to the field replaceable unit to the electronic device.

10. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of configuring the medical diagnostic system is in accordance with characteristic information regarding
10 operation of an x-ray tube, the x-ray tube being the field replaceable unit.

11. An apparatus which provides for the association of a field replaceable unit to a medical diagnostic system and the recording of field replaceable unit operational data, the apparatus comprising:

a storage medium physically coupled to the field replaceable unit, the
15 storage medium containing identification information for a field replaceable unit; and

a programmed digital processing circuit coupled to the storage medium, the processing circuit being responsive to requests for identification information from the medical diagnostic system.

20 12. The apparatus of claim 11, further comprising a communication interface coupled to the medical diagnostic system, the communication interface being configured to allow communications between the medical diagnostic system and a remote facility via a network.

25 13. The apparatus of claim 11, wherein the storage medium provides a memory location for a record of operational data for the field replaceable unit.

14. The apparatus of claim 11, wherein the storage medium contains characterization information related to the configuration of the medical diagnostic system for the operation of the field replaceable unit.

15. The apparatus of claim 11, wherein the storage medium is physically coupled to an x-ray tube, the x-ray tube being the field replaceable unit.

16. A system for associating a field replaceable unit with a medical diagnostic system, the system comprising:

means for electronically querying for information on a field replaceable unit to be associated with a medical diagnostic system;

10 means for electronically receiving information on the field replaceable unit; and

means for configuring the medical diagnostic system in accordance with the information.

17. The system of claim 16, further comprising means attached to the field replaceable unit for storing association information regarding the field replaceable unit.

18. The system of claim 16, further comprising means for recording operational information associated with the operation of the field service unit in the medical diagnostic system.

20 19. The system of claim 16, further comprising means for interfacing with a remote facility via a communication network.

20. The system of claim 19, further comprising means for reconfiguring the medical diagnostic system in accordance with association information from the remote facility.

25 21. The system of claim 19, further comprising means for servicing the field service unit via the communication network.

22. The system of claim 16, wherein the means for configuring the medical diagnostic system is in accordance with characteristic information regarding operation of an x-ray tube, the x-ray tube being the field replaceable unit.